



U.S. Senator Judd Gregg, Chairman

Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions

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Contact: Christine Iverson
(202) 224-6770

Statement of Chairman Judd Gregg

HELP Committee Markup
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Washington, DC—"Today we are doing our part to protect the American people from the threat of a bio-terror attack by making a compensation package available to those first responders and health care workers who volunteer to be vaccinated against smallpox."

"By vaccinating first responders and health care workers now, and moving forward with those vaccinations as quickly as possible, we ensure that if an attack occurs, those on the front lines will be ready and can safely and effectively do the work of caring for those infected and preventing the disease from spreading."

"The bill we are marking up today is a generous package designed to give those first responders the level of comfort and confidence they need to proceed with the vaccination process. The \$262,000 lump sum death benefit is the same amount paid to police officers fatally wounded in the line of duty. And it is more than the \$256,000 immediate lump sum paid to a soldier who may be fatally wounded defending freedom on the battlefields of Iraq."

"The President has provided funding for this program in his supplemental budget request and I expect Congress to provide that funding when we pass the supplemental."

"This is not a legal issue. This is not a health issue. This is a national security issue. We are at war. We have a fundamental obligation as members of the Senate to put our differences aside and work together to make sure the American people are protected from the worst our enemies can do. The passage of this legislation is vital to the safety of the American people."

"Today we are also taking up the Improved Vaccine Affordability and Availability Act. Child advocacy groups have recommended and requested the improvements we are making to this program today. These changes will make the program more accessible to the families and children it was designed to help by extending the statute of limitations so more families can apply to the program."

"We are also passing the "Caring for Children Act of 2003" which reauthorizes the Child Care and Development Block Grant. This legislation is essential to continued success with welfare reform because it helps low-income parents find and pay for affordable childcare, allowing them to continue working."

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